

TENNESSEE

MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING NEWS
DECEMBER 2005



We at the Tennessee Rural Development office have always felt that information and knowledge is very valuable. With new program availability and ever changing program requirements, we felt that a newsletter would be a valuable tool in helping you keep up to date. We hope that you find this newsletter both educating and informative. It is our plan to send this out every other month., or as notification of urgent program announcements. We would encourage and appreciate any questions, comments or suggestions.

Thank you,

The Rural Development Staff

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

UNAUTHORIZED ASSISTANCE

The new regulations state that the borrower is no longer responsible for collection of unauthorized assistance when a tenant vacated the unit provided that the borrower notifies RD of the tenant's move and transfers all records related to the tenant's unauthorized assistance to RD within 30 days of the tenant's move.

In order for RD to take over collection of the unauthorized assistance through the Treasury Offset Program (TOP), we must verify the calculations completed by the borrower/management agent. Therefore, once the tenant has vacated, please send the following

items to the appropriate field staff for further review:

- Vacate date
- Copy of verification of income(s)
- Copy of calculations where unauthorized assistance was computed
- Any documentation of contact by the tenant or management agent regarding the potential/identification/repayment of unauthorized assistance

Further information on unauthorized assistance can be found in 7CFR 3560, Subpart O.

UNUSED RENTAL ASSISTANCE

Unused Rental Assistance is one of the top concerns of the Agency. The National Office is looking at different ways to recapture unused Rental Assistance to be used throughout the Nation. Therefore, there is the potential that RA may be lost in Tennessee. We ask that you please review the projects that have unused RA to be sure that all units that can be assigned have been assigned. Over the next several months you may be called by an RD employee to discuss unused RA that has been unused for 6 months or more.

RD reports to National Office on a quarterly basis on RA that has been unused 6 months or longer.



Which property is eligible for Rental Assistance?

When a tenant moves from one RD property to another without properly vacating, RD states that property where tenant laid head the night of the 1st of the month will be entitled to the Rental Assistance. The losing property may use their lease which is enforceable by law if the tenant did not give proper notice and receive some source of funds.

REMINDER



If your property experiences flood, fire, roof problems, etc., be sure to notify the Area Rural Development Office **immediately**. We have had instances of fires burning units or buildings, storm damage, drug raids, or other adverse issues, and have not been notified until we either receive tenant or congressional inquiries. Please keep us informed as to what is happening at your complex so we can adequately address inquiries.



NOTICE

Effective February 24, 2006, all properties with 8 units or more will be required to transmit tenant certifications and budget information electronically.

Please contact your local area offices for assistance.



NEW ADDITION TO STATE OFFICE STAFF

Welcome to Laura Pope who joins the State Office staff as our Multi Family Technician. Laura has over 17 years working with USDA programs. She can be reached at (615) 783-1385.

LATE FEES FOR CERTIFICATIONS

For those of you that are sending tenants transactions through the mail. Effective May 1, 2005 any tenant transaction received after the 10th of the month will be considered late. RA will not be provided for those certifications and overage will be charged when appropriate. For example, RD received a tenant certification on May 11 with an effective date of May 1. RA will not be provided for this tenant and overage will be charged when appropriate.

For those of you that are transmitting on MINC. A notice will be displayed when sending in tenant

certifications, using the MINC Fill-a-Form pages, after the 10th of the month. As of May 1, any tenant certifications received after the 10th of the month will be considered late. For example, RD received a tenant certification transmission on May 11 with an effective date of May 1. RA will not be provided for this tenant and overage will be charged when appropriate.

Each time you attempt to transmit, you will also receive a "Manual Information Transfer Confirmation Page", but this does not mean the transaction was accepted.

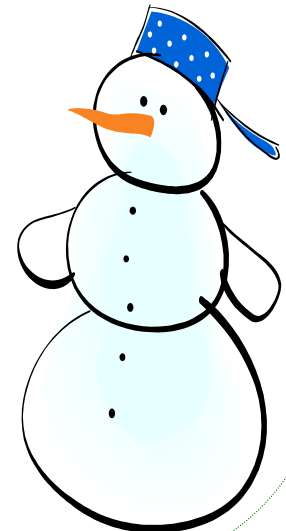
You will receive a "Borrower Tenant Mail Listing" as a message that RD has received and accepted the transaction. This provides you with two methods of notification, prior to receiving your project worksheet, that your transmissions were successfully received. If you request a waiver of any overage charges you will need to have a copy of these screen prints for the transaction in question. If a Tenant Certification or Recertification is rejected, you must transmit the correction by the 10th of the month or overage will be assessed.



SECTION 8 RENT INCREASES

If your property will be implementing a rent increase during 2006, please remember to promptly notify the Section 8 Voucher Provider if you have any Section 8 voucher holders leasing on your property. Owners/Agents are responsible for notifying all tenants a minimum of 60 days in advance of any rent increase. Notification to the Section 8 tenant includes sending documentation to the issuing Public Housing Agency. The Section 8 Agency will be required to conduct a rent comparability

test to insure that the rent increase requested is comparable to other unassisted units in the market before approving the increase for the Section 8 family. If you have any questions on administering rent increases to Section 8 Voucher holders, please contact Don Harris at (615) 783-1375.



TOOLTIME TIPS

IT IS NOW REQUIRED THAT THE FOLLOWING ITEMS BE POSTED AT YOUR PROPERTIES:

- * Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plan
- * 7 CFR 3560.160, Tenant Grievances
- * "And Justice for All Poster" (rev. 3/98)
- * Project Occupancy Rules
- * Office Hours, if applicable
- * Emergency hours



WINTERIZATION

Winter is here and with it come some additional chores that need to happen to help prevent problems in the coming months:

- ♦ **Central Heat** - If you have central heating units, please check them to assure they are in good working order
- ♦ **Plumbing** - Take care of known issues with pipes that freeze. Insulation wrap, or heat tape can be used to keep them warm during extremely cold weather.
- ♦ **Doors and Windows** - Add or replace worn weather-stripping. Caulk gaps when necessary. Replace worn door stops at the bottom of doors.

and clean. Vacuum the vents and other heating components. Faulty heating equipment is the leading cause of home fires during this time of the year.

- ♦ **Smoke Alarms** - All smoke alarms should be checked to determine if they need new batteries or totally replaced. Typically you would be replacing batteries every spring and fall.

- ♦ **Dryer Vents** - Check the dryer vents in your laundry facilities as they can clog up with flammable lint.

- ♦ **Rain Gutters** - Clogged gutters can lead to property damage so be sure they are clean and free from debris.



Hurricane Evacuees Housing Assistance Information Link

Toll Free

1-800-414-1226

or visit

[http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rd/
disasters/katrina.html](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/rd/disasters/katrina.html)



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*We would like to extend to each and everyone a very
Happy and Safe Holiday Season.*

Sincerely,

The Rural Development Staff

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